



# New Jersey Department of Human Services Office of Children's Services

## RECRUITING, SUPPORTING AND RETAINING RESOURCE FAMILIES

**“Resource families are the backbone of our child welfare system. Without their support and dedication, our child welfare reform efforts would not be possible.”**

**James M. Davy, Commissioner**

- Resource families are families who provide loving, safe and stable families for a child when his own family is unable to do so.
- Resource families are foster families, adoptive families and relative caregivers.
- Resource families are an essential part of our child welfare system; without them, our child welfare reform plans could not be successful.

**We will recruit 1000 new Resource Families by June 30, 2005.**

### STRATEGIES TO RECRUIT, RETAIN AND SUPPORT RESOURCE FAMILIES:

- ✓ **EXPAND RESOURCES FOR RESOURCE FAMILIES** Several million dollars will be available so that resource families may access respite services, expanded peer to peer support, and a pool of flexible funds to fill the gap between family needs and available resources.
- ✓ **Increase Board Payments** Board payments for relative caregivers were increased to the level of board payments to non-kin foster families as of July 1, 2004 resulting in an average increase to relative caregivers of 68%. In addition, rates for all resource foster families will be raised to equal the USDA estimated cost of raising a child in the urban northeast by 10% of the gap by December 31, 2004; by a further 15% of the gap by July 31, 2005; a further 25% by July 31, 2006; a further 25% by July 31, 2007; and the final 25% by July 31, 2008.
- ✓ **Streamline Licensing and Training** The state will apply the same process for licensing and training to both foster and adoptive families. The process will be streamlined so that it is completed within 90 days of application.
- ✓ **Hire Resource Family Support Workers** New staff positions have been created to facilitate training, link resource families to services and provide ongoing support to resource families. Each Resource Family Support Worker will work with up to 35 resource families in the same geographic area.
- ✓ **Target Recruitment** Recruit resource families in geographic areas of highest need tailored to specific populations of children including boarder babies, adolescents and sibling groups. Faith-based organizations and community organizations will be enlisted to recruit resource families.

For more information log on to [www.dhs.state.nj.us](http://www.dhs.state.nj.us) or contact

[dhschildrenservices@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:dhschildrenservices@dhs.state.nj.us)

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